



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Request for Proposals

Development of an Enhanced Comprehensive Reentry System

RFP Posting:

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Information Session:

10:30 a.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, May 14, 2024

Office Hours:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Questions Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, June 7, 2024

Submission Deadline:

3 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, June 20, 2024

Estimated Award Decision/Notification:

August 2024

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Contents

Acronyms and Definitions

The RFP at a Glance

Section 1: Why DHS Is Issuing This RFP

Section 2: What DHS Is Looking For

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

Section 5: How DHS Will Evaluate Your Proposal

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

Appendices are available through the provided links and can be found on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) and on the [Active Solicitations Webpage](#).

[Appendix A: Disproportionate Effects of the Justice System](#)

[Appendix B: Centering Stakeholder Input and the RNR Model to Enhance the Reentry System](#)

Acronyms and Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following capitalized words are defined as follows for purposes of this RFP:

1. Agreement: A contract negotiated between Allegheny County and the Successful Proposer to provide the Contract Services
2. Allegheny County: A home rule county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3. Activities-Based Programming: One of three programming types to be procured through this RFP for expansion of the Reentry System
4. ACJ: Allegheny County Jail
5. Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (ACJC): a longstanding partnership between DHS, Allegheny County Jail and the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas that implements programming and promotes system change to reduce recidivism and promote public safety
6. Cognitive Behavioral Interventions: a psychotherapeutic approach that addresses the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviors and posits that altering the way a participant interprets stimuli (thoughts and feelings) can lead to positive behavior change
7. Contract Services: The specific services that the Successful Proposer agrees to provide to the County in response to this RFP as more particularly described in the Scope of Services in the Agreement
8. DHS: [Allegheny County] Department of Human Services
9. MAT: Medication-Assisted Treatment
10. Proposal: A completed Response Form, with specified attachments, submitted in response to this RFP
11. Proposer: The individual, non-profit organization, or for-profit organization or business submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP
12. Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R): a cognitive behavioral intervention that empowers individuals experiencing significant motivation difficulties or those who have revolved through institutional settings regularly and/or have treatment needs related to substance use or mental health challenges
13. Reentry System: The compilation of all programming available to justice-involved individuals, including services in jail that can be accessed throughout incarceration as well as community-based resources that can be accessed post-release and/or while under probation supervision
14. Reentry Program: a specialized effort by the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative to provide pre- and post-release services to individuals in the Allegheny County Jail who are expected to be incarcerated for 7-9 months and are at highest risk for recidivism; participants are assigned a service coordinator and reentry probation officer to support their establishment of an individualized service plan
15. Response Form: The Word document in which Proposers respond to requested information about this RFP
16. RFP: Request for Proposals
17. RNR: Risk, Needs and Responsivity Model

18. Curriculum-Based Programming: One of three types of programs sought through this RFP. This program consists of 4 categories: mental and physical health, substance use treatment-related supports, job training and development, and relationship building and maintenance.
19. Successful Proposer: The Proposer(s) selected by the County to provide the Contract Services
20. SUD: Substance Use Disorder; includes both Opioid and non-Opioid substance use
21. The Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R) Course: One of three types of program sought through this RFP. The Course has been developed by Beck Institute and will be facilitated by the Successful Proposer(s) in the Jail and in the community. The Successful Proposer(s) will collaborate with Beck Institute to adapt curriculum as needed.

Other terms shall have the meaning or definition as stated in the RFP.

The RFP at a Glance

Purpose

Allegheny County, through its Department of Human Services (DHS), and on behalf of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (ACJC), is seeking Proposals from multiple qualified Proposers to contribute to our vision of an expanded and comprehensive Reentry System for people in and leaving the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ). Services sought through this RFP include: 1) the development and facilitation of a Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R) Course in collaboration with Beck Institute; 2) the design and facilitation of Curriculum-Based Programming for mental and physical health, substance use treatment-related supports, job training and development, and relationship building and maintenance; and 3) Resource Coordination and organization/coordination of Activity-Based Programming.

We envision identifying one Successful Proposer for the CT-R Course, more than one Successful Proposer(s) for Curriculum-Based Programming, and one Successful Proposer for Activities-Based Programming and Resource Coordination. Proposers may propose to provide any or multiple service options.

The RFP is part of an overarching effort to reduce recidivism and improve quality of life, educational attainment and employment outcomes through an enhanced local Reentry System that is more robust, effective and coordinated.

The programs and services procured through this RFP will complement and build upon existing services provided in the ACJ. These initiatives represent a renewed and concerted focus on ensuring that jail incarceration is limited, brief and non-recurrent. We envision that they will support and coordinate with ongoing community-based efforts to increase access to basic needs, reduce violence, improve behavioral health crisis prevention and response, and provide viable alternatives to arrest for people who frequently encounter the criminal legal system due to their behavioral health needs.

Collaboration and intentional partnerships are key priorities of the ACJC's vision for a comprehensive Reentry System. Given these priorities and the growing body of evidence about the cumulative impact of Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (CBI), **all** Successful Proposers will work with Beck Institute to incorporate elements of Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R) into their curricula, facilitation strategies and interventions.

Please join us for a [virtual information session](#) on Tuesday, May 14 at 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time and/or a [virtual office hours session](#) on Wednesday, May 22 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time.

Award Details

DHS intends to enter into Agreements with multiple Successful Proposers, each one providing one or more of the described service options within the Reentry System for a term of 2 years, with an opportunity to renew the contract at the discretion of DHS. We anticipate that awarded annual budgets will range from \$150,000-\$400,000 per service provided. However, DHS will

consider all proposed costs for reasonableness and negotiate the final budget with the Successful Proposer(s) through Allegheny County’s contracting process. Successful Proposers should anticipate that contracts will be tied to mutually agreed upon metrics and benchmarks to help the Successful Proposers and DHS measure progress and success.

County-contracted providers are typically paid for services via a monthly reimbursement model for costs incurred. If you anticipate that your organization would benefit from an advance of funds to begin the contracted work prior to incurring costs, please detail the requested amount in your budget and budget narrative, including a proposed schedule for total repayment of the advance, via the monthly cost reimbursement process, by the end of DHS's upcoming fiscal year on June 30, 2025.

If selected, requesting an advance does not guarantee you will receive one. Any potential advance provided will be determined at DHS's discretion. DHS will review all requests for reasonableness and negotiate any potential advance, total funding and final contract terms with the Successful Proposer.

Technical assistance and training related to CT-R will be provided through Beck Institute at no cost to Successful Proposers. Budgets should not include training and technical assistance costs for CT-R but may include reasonable costs associated with agency or project-specific training offered to relevant staff employed by the Successful Proposer. A schedule for any necessary or desired technical assistance and training will be determined in collaboration with the Successful Proposers, Beck Institute and DHS.

More details about preparing a proposed budget can be found in Section 3 of this RFP.

Who can submit a Proposal

All entities, including but not limited to non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, small businesses and individuals with experience serving justice-involved individuals, whether that be in a carceral setting or in the community, are eligible to submit a Proposal in response to this RFP. Proposers do not need to have an existing contract with Allegheny County to apply, but they must meet all of Allegheny County’s contractual requirements (see Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers) and have the programmatic, financial and staffing capabilities to provide the Contracted Services.

Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more organizations partner to submit one Proposal, are permitted, but not required. See Section 4.2.c for details. An entity may participate in more than one collaborative Proposal or apply to offer more than one service.

Timeline

RFP Posting	Tuesday, April 23, 2024
Information Session (see section 4.1 for details)	Tuesday, May 14 at 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time
Office Hours (see section 4.1 for details)	Wednesday, May 22 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time
Questions Deadline	Friday, June 7 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time

Last Website and Q&A Update	Thursday, June 13 at 6 p.m. Eastern Time
Submission Deadline	Thursday, June 20 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time
Estimated Award Decision/Notification	August 2024

Who we are

On behalf of Allegheny County and the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (ACJC), DHS is the issuing office for this RFP. DHS is the largest department of Allegheny County government and provides publicly funded services to more than 200,000 people annually, in areas including child welfare, behavioral health, aging, developmental supports, homelessness and community services.

More information about DHS is available at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx>

The ACJC is a longstanding partnership between DHS, the Allegheny County Jail and the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas that implements programming and system changes to reduce recidivism and promote public safety in collaboration with community-based providers.

Section 1: Why DHS Is Issuing This RFP

Disproportionate Effects of the Justice System¹

In Allegheny County and throughout the nation, individuals are often punished for behaviors related to their human service needs (e.g., treatment and recovery support for substance use, mental health issues, poverty and trauma). The justice system has historically been given the responsibility of responding to and remedying all crime, including both criminalized behaviors that reflect human service needs and crimes against persons, property or society. The result is a justice system that disproportionately penalizes individuals with trauma, behavioral health needs (substance use and mental health) and other human service needs while failing to make communities safer by incarcerating people without intentional opportunities for rehabilitation. This RFP aims to create meaningful opportunities for those incarcerated to prepare for their transition back into the community, addressing their human service needs and fostering skills and resilience that will prevent recidivism.

The negative effects of the justice system are particularly devastating to Black individuals, as well as those living in poverty, with behavioral health issues and/or with other human service needs. People with arrest, conviction and/or incarceration records face significant barriers in accessing housing, employment, benefits and earnings. Improving its Reentry System is one way Allegheny County is working to reduce recidivism and connect people to appropriate services, while reducing the disproportionate incarceration of Black individuals and those with human service needs. Further context is available in [Appendix A: Disproportionate Effects of the Justice System](#).

¹ Additional information regarding the disproportionate effects of the justice system locally and nationwide can be found in Appendix A.

Previous and Current Efforts by the ACJC

Since its inception in 2000, the ACJC has influenced system change and implemented evidence-based and promising programming to advance its mission of reducing recidivism in Allegheny County through interagency collaboration and strategic planning. Over time, and particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACJC has recognized that a different approach is needed in the local justice system. In recent years, stakeholders have focused on developing strategies to divert people from arrest and incarceration as early and as often as possible while safely reducing the length of incarceration for those in the ACJ. Through these efforts, the incarcerated population has decreased from an average of 2,708 individuals in September 2019 to 1,790 individuals in February 2024. While reducing avoidable arrests and incarceration remains a chief priority, ensuring appropriate access to in-jail programs, activities and post-release connections to care is also an essential element of reentry programming.

Reentry services in the Jail have not been solicited in an intentional way since 2015 when DHS issued an RFP to offer the following services: cognitive-behavioral therapy, drug and alcohol evaluation, housing assistance, adult education, community-based job search assistance, family support services and other innovative/creative services. Due to restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the ACJ was unable to maintain program offerings at the pre-pandemic level.

Despite the loss of particular programs due to Covid restrictions, the ACJC has had continued success with more intensive reentry services through its current Reentry Program. People who are at higher risk for recidivism and expected to be incarcerated for 7-9 months are enrolled into the ACJ's Reentry Program and are assigned a service coordinator and reentry probation officer. This team assists clients in establishing an individualized service plan and connects them to services in the ACJ, including those being identified through this RFP, and in the community. Approximately 115-150 incarcerated individuals receive the more intensive and individualized supports of the Reentry Program each year.

A 12-month review and evaluation of the Reentry Program conducted by the [Urban Institute's Justice Policy Center](#) in 2014 showed that the ACJC's Reentry Program reduced the probability of rearrest by 24% and prolonged time to rearrest when compared to a matched comparison group.

Given its success, the ACJC intends to keep the Reentry Program and its current reentry service coordination structure in place, linking individuals at highest risk of recidivism with the most intensive supports as they transition into the community, and complementing it with further program options to establish a comprehensive Reentry System in accordance with the Risk, Needs and Responsivity Model (RNR). The RNR model, a tool for considering best practices for reducing recidivism and enhancing public safety, suggests that justice systems can best achieve intended outcomes when the intensity of justice system supervision matches an individual's risk for recidivism (criminogenic risk) and when interventions focus on the conditions that contribute to an individual's criminalized behavior (criminogenic needs).

Based on RNR, the ACJC is making changes to provide the services people need most, prioritizing behavioral health concerns that may interfere with participation in other

programming and offering programs that focus on outcomes in the areas of employment, substance use, mental and physical health, and relationship building. More information regarding how DHS and the ACJC engaged an array of stakeholders, including incarcerated individuals, in development of the plan and goals of this RFP can be found in [Appendix B: Prioritizing Stakeholder Input and the Risk, Needs and Responsivity Model \(RNR\) Model to Enhance the Reentry System](#).

The Allegheny County Jail (ACJ) is located in downtown Pittsburgh and is comprised of 35 housing units on site as well as three Alternative Housing facilities operated by Renewal Inc. and Passages to Recovery. Housing units vary by security level and needs and include two specialty units designated to house and support incarcerated individuals who have a history of substance use. The ACJ also has a Reentry and Education Center with multiple classrooms and a Discharge and Release Center where individuals can collect resources as they're being released.

Through this RFP, DHS will build upon this approach that has proven successful in the past while updating practices to reflect a changed jail population, incorporating more input from incarcerated individuals and refreshing programs by incorporating evidence-informed best practices. Programming procured through this RFP is intended to expand the scale of services offered in the ACJ and re-establish a sustainable, coordinated and comprehensive Reentry System that meets the needs of more incarcerated individuals and invests in organizations with a demonstrated commitment to equity and improved justice system outcomes.

Infusing a Cognitive Behavioral Approach

This RFP seeks to identify Successful Proposers to offer supports in key domains, while also creating a unifying framework and approach to service provision rooted in the widely recognized benefits of Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (CBI). To this end, DHS has formalized a partnership with [Beck Institute](#), which will support Successful Proposers in considering how they may incorporate principles of Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R) in their proposed programming. By having a consistent framework, language and values embedded into the Reentry System, staff will empower participants to engage with programming and help them envision and take action to develop a meaningful life in the community beyond their justice involvement.

CT-R, developed by Beck Institute experts, is an advancement of CBI that empowers individuals who: 1) have significant difficulty accessing motivation; 2) have regularly revolved through institutional settings; and/or 3) have treatment needs related to substance use or mental health challenges. Where traditional CBI focuses on identifying and restructuring participants' negative beliefs about themselves, others and their future that may lead to criminal behavior, CT-R takes a strengths-based approach and works with participants to activate adaptive modes of living, develop aspirations and engage in personally meaningful activities. Through targeted cognitive strategies, participants create their desired life and strengthen a positive belief system. A key feature of CT-R is exploration of the individuals' identity beyond their challenges — what they're doing and how they're feeling when at their best — as well as their envisioned future and plans to achieve this vision. Incorporating CT-R strategies as a guiding evidence-based approach throughout the entire Reentry System will increase opportunities for justice-involved individuals to access a “dose” of CT-R throughout their days.

Through a formalized partnership with the ACJC, via DHS, Beck Institute will:

- Develop stand-alone, group-based CT-R curricula for a subset of individuals at the ACJ and in the community, to be delivered by a Successful Proposer.
- Develop self-paced CT-R offerings to complement the closed-group course that can be available for incarcerated individuals to access on a tablet or through other means on their housing units (particularly individuals with shorter stays in the ACJ who are not able to participate in the CT-R Course in-jail but who may benefit from the content).
- Offer training and technical assistance to a range of Reentry System stakeholders, including Successful Proposers and justice system workers, aimed at enhancing the system's ability to promote recovery and resiliency for individuals experiencing extensive behavioral, social and physical health challenges.

For individuals who have the shortest lengths of stay – in 2023, 42% of the population stayed 10 days or less – the ACJC envisions offering a self-paced CT-R option and will attempt to connect these individuals to services that meet their needs in the community.

Activity-Based Programming to Complement Curriculum-Based Programming

In addition to offering more intensive Curriculum-Based Programming, DHS is also interested in Activities-Based Programming that offers meaningful engagements during scheduled out-of-cell time and helps individuals develop prosocial ways to relieve stress and become actively involved in the community. By exploring and developing meaningful ways to fill free time, both in the ACJ and in the community, individuals can connect with their peers, develop and reconnect to their identity, and develop resiliency and purpose.

This group of contracted Activities-Based Programming will be the first of its kind in the ACJ. Through the coordination and facilitation of Activities-Based Programming and resource coordination, DHS and the ACJC hope to help reentrants develop prosocial hobbies, learn new skills, and develop creative outlets that support their overall wellbeing while in jail and potentially influence how free time is spent upon release. While additional research is needed to understand whether Activities-Based Programming has a meaningful impact on reducing recidivism in Allegheny County, we look forward to learning how these offerings create meaning for incarcerated and post-incarcerated individuals.

Section 2: What DHS Is Looking For

The Reentry System described in this RFP is intended to be comprehensive and to incorporate principles of CT-R throughout its programming. This System will offer both shorter-term Activities-Based Programming and more intensive, Curriculum-Based Programming, depending upon an individual's length of stay, risks and needs, behavioral health needs and other factors. More intensive services will be directed toward those who are determined, through screening and assessment tools, to be at higher risk of recidivism.

We are seeking multiple Successful Proposers to establish a comprehensive Reentry System, including: 1) administration and facilitation of CT-R Courses in the ACJ and multiple

community-based settings in collaboration with Beck Institute; 2) implementation and facilitation of Curriculum-Based Programming in the ACJ related to mental and physical health, substance use treatment-related supports, job training and development, and relationship building and maintenance; and 3) coordination of Activities-Based Programming and library resources. Curriculum-Based Programming Successful Proposers should be capable of both facilitating programming in the Jail and providing complementary resources for reentering participants.

2.1 Collaboration with Beck Institute

Successful Proposers will use CT-R principles and practices to activate a positive belief system that focuses on individual strength, resiliency and personal empowerment to face the challenges of reentry. Proposers do not have to have prior experience in implementing CT-R or CBI but should consider how their proposed programming and facilitation techniques may benefit from training by and collaboration with Beck Institute to incorporate elements of CT-R.

Proposers should consider collaborating with Beck Institute in any or all the following ways:

- Participate in CT-R training alongside other successful Proposers and justice system staff
- Participate in weekly consultation sessions to incorporate principles of CT-R into curriculum and facilitation techniques
- Participate in case consultation meetings to discuss specific individuals and how to best employ CT-R to foster their unique strengths and address any challenges or barriers that arise
- Participate in inter-disciplinary and cross-systems meetings to discuss how different providers and staff can use CT-R to facilitate continuity of care and support transitioning to the community
- Participate in additional training to become a champion of CT-R, training new staff over time to utilize CT-R in the local justice system and beyond
- Participate in focus groups or on advisory boards that seek to adapt CT-R to best fit the needs of the system or new target populations or methods of delivery (e.g., self-paced CT-R)
- Assist Beck Institute staff in completion or collection of outcome measures to evaluate the impact of CT-R in the ACJ Reentry System.

The Jail will work with Successful Proposers to provide access to cubicle space and computers at the ACJ, though these resources will likely be shared between Successful Proposers and other Reentry System support staff. Successful Proposers should not anticipate having private, separate office space, however, dedicated, lockable file cabinets will be provided. All Successful Proposers must be adaptable and collaborative to utilize assigned space in the ACJ as efficiently as possible.

2.2 Target Population

This RFP seeks to expand services for a broad range of individuals in and upon release from the ACJ and/or while under probation supervision in the community.

The ACJ in downtown Pittsburgh is comprised of 35 housing units on site as well as three Alternative Housing facilities operated by Renewal Inc. and Passages to Recovery. Housing units vary by security level and needs including two specialty units designated to support incarcerated individuals who have a history of substance use. The ACJ also has a Reentry and Education Center with multiple classrooms and a Discharge and Release Center where individuals can collect resources as they're being released.

Including its three Alternative Housing locations, the ACJ has an average daily population of approximately 1,700 incarcerated individuals. In 2023, an average of 25 individuals were booked each day with nearly as many released daily. On average, 88% of the incarcerated population is male and 65% of the population is Black. For individuals booked in the past three years, the median length of stay is 15 days and the average length of stay is 59 days. Approximately 20% of the population remains incarcerated for over three months.² Successful Proposers will not be required to provide programming for the Alternative Housing facilities.

To adequately serve participants throughout the Reentry System, Successful Proposers should have a sound understanding of the structural reasons for disproportionate representation of Black individuals in the Allegheny County justice system and be attuned to the intersections of poverty, race, gender, trauma and justice system involvement. Successful Proposers must have the capacity to recruit and retain quality, diverse staff reflective of the population served, including individuals with lived experience with justice system involvement. Any staff providing on-site services at ACJ must maintain active Jail Clearances and follow all ACJ policies.

In addition, all Proposers must be able to provide culturally responsive programming and services, including to individuals with limited with limited English proficiency or other communication barriers. If resources for individuals with limited English proficiency or other communication barriers are necessary, DHS will work collaboratively with the Successful Proposers to identify appropriate resources. The Successful Proposers must ensure they will work collaboratively with DHS to successfully meet this standard.

2.3 The CT-R Course

Jail-Based CT-R Course

CT-R Course enrollment in the ACJ will prioritize individuals at higher risk of recidivation and those who are likely to be incarcerated for at least four weeks. The Successful Proposer should be prepared to facilitate groups five days per week in the ACJ Education and Reentry Center and to serve multiple, closed group cohorts of 15-20 participants. In accordance with ACJ security protocol, the jail-based program will be offered to men and women separately. In one year, the in-jail CT-R program is expected to serve at least 500 individuals. Beyond course facilitation, the CT-R Course Successful Proposer will also be required to participate in tasks such as outreach, administrative support and partnership-building with other stakeholders.

Community-Based CT-R Programming

² More information about the incarcerated population in Allegheny County can be found in the [Allegheny County Jail Population Management Dashboard](#).

The CT-R Course Successful Proposer will also offer an open-group CT-R Course in the community. This will allow individuals to seamlessly transition from the Jail-based CT-R Course to a community-based group following release. Probation will also refer people under supervision who are deemed at higher risk of recidivation.

The Successful Proposer will be expected to offer a community-based CT-R course in at least four different sites (e.g., libraries, community meeting spaces) accessible to people who: live in areas of the county most highly impacted by the criminal justice system, use public transportation, and work both traditional and non-traditional schedules. Specifically, the Successful Proposer should have the capacity to offer community-based CT-R multiple times per week and be open to offering some evening and weekend options. DHS will work with Successful Proposers to determine the best locations and times to host community-based CT-R Courses. Community-based CT-R programs will have an open group format meaning that participants will be welcome to attend community-based sessions that best suit their schedule.

We anticipate that the Successful Proposer will serve up to 700 individuals in the community-based CT-R program per year with each participant attending approximately 10 sessions. CT-R groups will be voluntary, not compulsory. The Successful Proposer should be willing to work with Beck Institute and the ACJC to develop mechanisms for incentivizing and/or rewarding participation.

The CT-R Course Successful Proposer will receive ongoing training and technical assistance from Beck Institute to adapt the curriculum as needed and facilitate the Course while maintaining fidelity to the principles of CT-R. DHS is interested in CT-R Proposers that employ CT-R facilitators who are peers or individuals with lived experience of criminal justice involvement and who demonstrate the ability to utilize creative facilitation techniques. There is no expectation that Successful Proposers have prior experience implementing CT-R or other Cognitive Behavioral Interventions.

The Successful Proposer in this category must include implementation and budgetary considerations for offering the proposed program in the ACJ to men and women separately, as well as in at least four community-based settings.

2.4 Curriculum-Based Programming

DHS is interested in creative Proposals that address one of the following service areas: Mental and Physical Health, Substance Use Treatment-Related Supports, Job Training and Development, and Relationship Building and Maintenance. Proposers may apply to develop and implement curriculum-based programming in one or more of the outlined service areas. We anticipate selecting at least one Successful Proposer to implement a program in each of these service areas; while we may select a Successful Proposer(s) to implement more than one program, we do not anticipate selecting only one Successful Proposer to implement all.

Individuals who are at higher risk and/or who are likely to be incarcerated for at least four weeks will be prioritized, based on length of stay data, for more intensive, Curriculum-Based Programming to optimize the potential to reduce. Individuals who do not meet these criteria will

be connected to Curriculum-Based Programming as capacity allows based on their relative needs and desire to participate.

Because Curriculum-Based Programming will operate in a closed group, multi-week structure, these programs would not be appropriate for individuals expected to be incarcerated for less than 30 days. We anticipate that up to approximately 35% (3,418 individuals in 2023) of the entire ACJ population will participate in at least one Curriculum-Based Program. Some Curriculum-Based Programming groups will be valuable to only smaller, targeted subsets of the population (e.g., parents, incarcerated women).

Curriculum-Based Programming will follow a closed group format and take place in the classrooms in the ACJ's Reentry and Education Center. Proposed curricula may be novel but should be evidence-based and trauma-informed.

The following details apply to all of the Curriculum-based Programming service areas:

- Successful Proposers should understand that Beck Institute will be providing technical assistance to support them in incorporating elements of CT-R in their program's content and/or facilitation techniques.
- Successful Proposers will communicate regularly with ACJC staff, Beck Institute and other service providers in the ACJ and in the community.
- Curricula should be designed to serve closed groups of 15-20 individuals in the ACJ on a regular cadence for up to six weeks.
- Successful Proposers should clearly define the target population for their programming and may propose curricula that are tailored to meet the needs of a specific subpopulation (e.g., parents, incarcerated women).
- Successful providers in all service areas should support participants in identifying pathways to continue similar programming in the community upon release.
- Successful Proposers must define the evidence base and/or theory of change that describes how each program addresses criminogenic needs, public safety and improved quality of life for those exiting incarceration.
- Successful Proposers are expected to meet or exceed enrollment targets set forth by the ACJC.
- Successful Proposers must follow documentation criteria established by the ACJC.

Mental and Physical Health

Incarceration can exacerbate physical and mental health conditions and increase risk for adverse health outcomes upon release. While the ACJ is responsible for coordinating direct mental and physical health treatment services, proposals submitted in this service area should include complementary health and wellness programming that can increase incarcerated individuals' understanding of their own physical and mental health and their learning about how to navigate and trust health providers in the community.

Programming in this service area should build and strengthen participants' ability to identify mental health symptoms and understand and cope with trauma. Possible topics include education in mental health first aid, wellness and recovery planning, and medication management.

Successful Proposers in this service area must include implementation and budgetary considerations for offering the proposed program in the ACJ on a regular cadence for up to six weeks.

Substance Use Treatment-related Supports

Given the prevalence of substance-use disorders (SUD) among incarcerated individuals, services that focus on supporting people through recovery are a high priority for the ACJC. Proposals submitted in this service area should include curriculum-based recovery education and supports for individuals with substance use issues, offered in conjunction with MAT or as a standalone program, that develops skills necessary to avoid or cope with situations that could lead to relapse. While evidence suggests that MAT is most effective when paired with such a program, people not involved in MAT can also benefit from recovery education and support.

The program should support individuals in recovery and provide harm reduction education, including the symptoms of SUD, the impacts of substance use and harm reduction techniques including Naloxone training that prepare participants to help others avoid overdose and move toward recovery. Proposals may offer a recovery support group with considerations to supporting loved ones with SUD as well as for relapse prevention planning.

Successful Proposers in this service area must include implementation and budgetary considerations for offering the proposed program in the ACJ on a regular cadence for up to six weeks.

Job Training and Development

Proposals submitted in this service area must include a curriculum-based program designed to develop the skills necessary for success in the job market and workplace with the intention of breaking the cycle of unemployment and poverty that often intersect with incarceration. The proposed program should prepare participants to connect meaningfully with post-release employment assistance resources. The curriculum should be rooted in evidence-based best practices for addressing criminogenic needs related to employment and work performance and aim to develop the workforce and cognitive skills (e.g., problem solving) needed to find and maintain employment.

Successful Proposals in this service area should focus on interview coaching, resume building and post-release workforce navigation (i.e., creating connections to jobs and networking opportunities in the community) and may include additional content such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship or digital literacy.

Successful Proposers in this service area must include implementation and budgetary considerations for offering the proposed program in the ACJ on a regular cadence for up to six weeks.

Relationship Building and Maintenance

Proposals submitted in this service area should include curriculum-based programming related to building and maintaining meaningful relationships that can serve as a protective factor to recidivism and other negative outcomes. Protective factors can be effective in altering automatic

responses to stimuli that might result in behaviors such as violence (Ullrich & Coid, 2011). Additionally, supportive social networks are associated with improved mental health and wellbeing and reinforce appropriate interpersonal skills crucial for success in the workplace and community.

Curricula must be rooted in evidence-informed best practices for addressing criminogenic needs related to meaningful relationships and/or family dynamics and support participants in developing skills and knowledge related to positive interpersonal interactions, while recognizing cultural and gender sensitivity. Programming should build and strengthen skills related to emotional regulation, anger management, conflict resolution and communication. These are skills that can apply to domestic partnerships as well as relationships with children, peers, employers and coworkers, and supervisory staff. Programs may also educate participants on the potential positive effects of healthy relationships on other outcomes including their employment and earnings prospects.

Successful Proposers in this service area must include implementation and budgetary considerations for offering the proposed program in the ACJ on a regular cadence for up to six weeks and may include concurrent and/or post-release programming that engages non-incarcerated family members in the community.

2.5 Activities-Based Programming and Resource Coordination

The Activities-Based Programming and Resource Coordination Successful Proposer will foster prosocial engagement by scheduling and promoting programming such as book clubs, art, motivational speakers, creative writing, and fitness on ACJ housing units. The ACJ facility includes 35 housing units or “pods” across eight floors and the ACJC envisions building capacity to offer at least one activity on each pod per day, though some exceptions may apply. Recognizing that certain activities may appeal to some people more than others, Activities-Based Programming should include anyone in the unit who is interested in participating in and behaviorally appropriate for the activity. The Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination Successful Proposer must also organize and distribute materials from the ACJ library as well as other resources.

Activities-Based Programming and Resource Coordination aims to benefit the incarcerated population broadly, regardless of length of stay. It will be at the discretion of ACJ security and classification to determine how to safely deliver these programs to all qualifying residents housed inside the jail.

To uphold the vision of increasing the number and type of services available to people while they are incarcerated, Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination Successful Proposer will have the following responsibilities:

- Create a schedule of activities across the ACJ housing units that offers at least one activity on each housing unit per day that is appropriate for the individuals in that housing unit and consistent with ACJ security protocol.
- Identify mission- and values-aligned external facilitators and/or facilitate activities for residents of ACJ’s housing units according to a predetermined schedule.

- Coordinate external facilitators, based upon agreed criteria, and coordinate payment to those unable to provide in-kind or volunteer services.
- Collaborate with ACJ staff to ensure that activities are offered in accordance with established policies.
- Work with the ACJ to advertise and encourage participation in scheduled activities.
- Collect regular feedback from participants and staff to gauge success of interventions, to make improvements and to determine future activities
- Curate and maintain organization of the ACJ library.
- Review and respond to requests for materials by incarcerated individuals and coordinate the distribution of materials based upon these requests.
- Maintain records of recreational equipment distributed to housing units.
- Account for recreational equipment and notify ACJ personnel when additional equipment is needed.

The ACJC and ACJ staff will work collaboratively with the Activities-Based Programming and Resource Coordination Successful Proposer to understand and develop resource management and distribution systems for library and recreational materials. The Activities-Based Programming and Resource Coordination Successful Proposer will be expected to complete CT-R training through Beck Institute, paid for by DHS, so they are equipped to vet and offer support to any external facilitators that are brought into the ACJ and have the necessary knowledge to incorporate principles of CT-R into each of their interactions with incarcerated individuals.

To best support this Successful Proposer in identifying and selecting external facilitators of Activity-Based Programming, the ACJC and DHS intend to partner with the Successful Proposer to establish a low-barrier structure for vetting facilitators and preparing them to work within the facility. A small but sustainable pool of funding will be available for the Activities-Based Programming Successful Proposer to compensate external facilitators as needed; however, the Successful Proposer should also consider partners who are equipped with grant funding for this structure of programming as well as those interested in offering services on a volunteer basis.

Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

DHS will evaluate Proposals based upon the evaluation criteria listed below. Proposers must address their qualifications in their Proposal by responding to the requested items or questions in the Response Form. Proposers should download and type their responses directly into the Response Form available on the Active Solicitations webpage at <https://solicitations.alleghenycounty.us/>.

The maximum score that a Proposal can receive in each category of service is:

- Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R) Courses Facilitation = 95 points possible
- Curriculum-based Programming = 105 points possible
- Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination = 80 points possible

Organization Experience (30 Points)

- Organizational experience and success working in difficult settings with high-need individuals and/or communities with diverse identities, especially current or former justice-involved individuals (10 points)
- Organizational experience and success in building trust in the communities within which you work, including at least one letter of support from a community-based organization/individual (10 points)
- Organizational understanding of trauma-informed approaches and explanation of how trauma-informed approaches will manifest in the Proposer's program(s) and/or when working with program participants (10 points)

Organization Capacity (15 Points)

- Organizational capacity to recruit, retain and supervise high-quality, diverse staff, including individuals with lived experience with justice system involvement (5 points)
- Sample staffing plan for providing sufficient coverage at all times with an appropriate number of staff who have appropriate responsibilities and levels of experience (5 points)
- Description of how the Proposer intends to work with Beck Institute and strategies for agency-specific staff training, supervision and quality assurance (5 points)

CT-R Courses Facilitation (40 Points)

- Clear statement about why the Proposer is interested in facilitating CT-R Courses and how it aligns with the Proposer's mission or current work (5 points)
- Organizational experience implementing an evidence-informed program, intervention and/or service to model fidelity (5 points)
- Description of proposed facilitation approach in the ACJ and the community, including suggested locations, schedule and frequency, and engagement strategy for community-based groups (25 points)
- Description of how Proposal incorporates peers or other credible messengers (5 points)

Curriculum-based Programming (50 Points)

- Clear statement about why the Proposer is interested in developing and facilitating Curriculum-based Programming in the chosen service area(s) and how it aligns with the Proposer's mission or current work (5 points)
- Organizational experience implementing an evidence-informed program, intervention and/or service to model fidelity (5 points)
- Description of the Proposed approach to the design of the curriculum, including a sample curriculum, for the proposed service area(s) and any pathways to complementary community-based programming (20 points)
- Description of how the Proposer intends to facilitate the curriculum for the proposed programming for each proposed service area (5 points)
- Description of the intended outcomes of the proposed programming and associated measures of success (5 points)
- Description of the evidence base supporting the proposed programming and explanation of how the proposed Initiative will achieve the intended outcomes (10 points)

Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination (25 Points)

- Clear statement about why the Proposer is interested in coordinating activities and resources for individuals incarcerated in the ACJ and how it aligns with the Proposer's mission or current work (10 points)
- Description of the proposed approach, including a sample schedule of all proposed activities including challenges you (10 points)
- Description of potential challenges anticipated and how you intend to address them (5 points)

Budget (10 Points)

- Line-item budget of the costs associated with all proposed strategies, including staff salaries, matching funds, and total expenses and revenues (5 points)
- Budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in the proposed line-item budget (5 points)

For consistency across Proposals, proposed budgets should be annualized and based off the following assumptions:

- CT-R Courses will be facilitated five days per week in the ACJ with each closed group serving 15-20 participants. Closed groups will be separated by gender with men's groups meeting three times per week for 6-7 weeks and women's groups meeting two times per week for 4-5 weeks. In total it is estimated that 200 women and 300 men will participate each year.
- CT-R Courses will be facilitated in at least four community-based settings during various times of day and days of the week with 15-20 participants attending each session. Through an open group format, up to 700 individuals will participate per year with each participant attending approximately 10 sessions.
- Curriculum-Based Programming will serve 15-20 people in the ACJ on a meeting cadence of one session per week for up to six weeks.
- Activity-based Programming and Resource Coordination will require full-time staffing at the ACJ five days per week during hours to be determined with ACJ staff.

Section 4: How to Submit a Proposal

4.1 Prepare

a. Information Session

- DHS will conduct an information session about this RFP at 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, via Microsoft Teams. It will include a presentation about the RFP and DHS staff will answer questions from attendees.
- Attendance at the information session is not required in order to submit a Proposal. Everything (video recording, slide deck, transcribed Q&A) shared during the information session will be posted afterwards on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) and the [DHS Solicitations webpage](#).

- Preliminary answers will be provided orally for questions asked during the conference. Final definitive answers will be posted in writing on Bonfire on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) and on the [DHS Solicitations webpage](#).
 - Prospective Proposers can join the information session by:
 - Calling (267) 368-7515 and using Conference ID 747 481 899#
 - Or following this link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
 - Or copying and pasting this link: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ZTMwMGNkMGMtZDdhZS00NDEyLTg5NzEtZDBlYTg1YzlmOTQ0%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e0273d12-e4cb-4eb1-9f70-8bba16fb968d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2214304098-3e8b-4bb4-b68e-65e6055b37bf%22%7d
- b. Office Hours
- DHS will hold “RFP open office hours” at 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, via Microsoft Teams. Anyone interested in the RFP and in submitting a Proposal may drop in during this time to ask questions.
 - Attendance during office hours is not required in order to submit a Proposal. Preliminary answers will be provided orally for questions asked during the office hours. Final, definitive answers will be posted in writing on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) and the [DHS Solicitations webpage](#).
 - Prospective Proposers can join the office hours by:
 - Calling (267) 368-7515 and using Conference ID 172 217 042#
 - Or following this link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
 - Or copying and pasting this link: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_Mzc2YWVjYzgtNjY5Mi00MzU1LWI1ZjktM2E5MGJmM2I1YzUz%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e0273d12-e4cb-4eb1-9f70-8bba16fb968d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2214304098-3e8b-4bb4-b68e-65e6055b37bf%22%7d

4.2 Submit a Proposal

- a. Proposers should take time to review and understand the RFP in its entirety including:
 - The background (see Section 1: Why DHS Is Issuing This RFP)
 - The narrative (see Section 2: What DHS Is Looking For)
 - The requirements (see Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria)
 - The evaluation process (see Section 5: How DHS Will Evaluate Your Proposal)
- b. Proposers must use the Response Form to develop your Proposal. Type your responses to each requested item directly into the Response Form. It is available on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#) on our DHS Bonfire Portal and on our Active Solicitations webpage with the RFP announcement at <https://solicitations.alleghenycounty.us/>.
- c. Collaborative Proposals
 - Collaborative Proposals, in which two or more entities partner to apply together, are permitted. Collaborative Proposals can include:
 - i. Lead Agency: The County can enter a contract with only one partner of a Collaborative Proposal. Therefore, a Collaborative Proposal must

- identify one entity as the Lead Agency that will be the contracting party with the County. The Lead Agency should be the Proposer.
- ii. **Partners:** Partners must be committed to a role in carrying out the Contract Services and will be compensated for that role. Collaborative Proposals must attach a signed letter of commitment from each Partner that details and agrees to their role in the Contract Services.
 - Entities may participate in more than one Collaborative Proposal.
 - d. Proposers must submit a complete Proposal that includes the following attachments:
 - Response Form (*available on the RFP Opportunity Page on Bonfire and on the Active Solicitations Webpage*)
 - Sample Staffing Plan (*please provide a staffing plan for each service proposed*)
 - Sample Curriculum (*only for Proposers of Curriculum-Based Programming*)
 - Sample Activities Schedule (*only for Proposers of Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination*)
 - Letter(s) of support from a community-based organization/individual
 - Partner commitment letters, if applicable
 - W-9
 - Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) documents (see sections 7.1 and 7.2)
 - e. Proposers should not send any attachments other than those listed either above or in the Response Form.
 - f. Proposers must make sure to complete each section of the Response Form and to stay within any word counts or page limits specified in the Response Form.
 - g. **Proposals must be submitted electronically by logging into or creating an account on Bonfire at <https://alleghenycountydhs.bonfirehub.com> and uploading the required submission documents to the appropriate [RFP Opportunity Page](#) no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, June 20, 2024, to be considered for review. If you are having trouble making an account or uploading your documents, please contact Bonfire Support. You can also reach out to the DHS Procurement Team at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us or (412) 350-6352.**
 - h. All Proposals must be submitted before the deadline! Once the deadline has passed, the RFP Opportunity Page will no longer accept Proposals. If a Proposal is late, it will be rejected and will not be presented to the Evaluation Committee (as described in Section 5 below) for review and scoring.
 - i. Proposers will receive an email acknowledging receipt of their Proposal. If a Proposer does not receive this notification within 48 hours of submitting their Proposal, please contact: DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.

4.3 How to Contact DHS about this RFP and RFP Communications

- a. If you have any questions about this RFP, please use the Vendor Discussion feature through the DHS Bonfire Portal at <https://alleghenycountydhs.bonfirehub.com> on the [RFP Opportunity Page](#), or email us at DHSProposals@alleghenycounty.us.
 - a. All content-related questions must be submitted by the Questions Deadline at 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, June 7, 2024.

- b. You may submit technical or logistical questions at any time, even after the Questions Deadline.
- b. All information about the RFP, including answers to all content-related questions and any changes or amendments, will be posted on the [Bonfire RFP Opportunity Page](#) and on our Active Solicitations website at <https://solicitations.alleghenycounty.us/>. Once you have created an account and indicated you are interested in this RFP, you will receive automatic email updates through Bonfire when any questions, changes or amendments are available.
 - a. Please check our DHS Bonfire Portal and the website regularly for answers to questions, additional information and changes to the RFP or the RFP process.
 - b. The webpage will be updated only on Thursdays, with any new information visible after 6 p.m.
 - c. The last Q&A and website update for this RFP will be on Thursday, June 13, 2024, at 6 p.m. We will make every effort not to post any new information after this time; however, we reserve the right to post new information in emergency circumstances.

4.4 New Provider Requirements

Any Successful Proposer(s) who does not have current Allegheny County DHS contract must submit the DHS New Provider Application and its supporting documents upon Notice of Intent to Award. Proposers are not required to submit this documentation with their Proposal.

- a. The DHS New Provider Application is available at our Active Solicitations website under the “Required documents” bar at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- b. The DHS New Provider Application asks for audited financial reports for the last three years. If a Proposer does not have audited financial reports for the last three years, then the Proposer may submit other financial documentation that attest to the financial health of the organization. Tax returns are the preferred alternative. Please note that providing adequate financial documentation is a requirement of contracting through Allegheny County.

4.5 Other Information

- a. **The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to accept any Proposal or enter into an Agreement with any Proposers. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and to not enter into an Agreement for the Contracted Services.**
- b. Any Agreement originating from this RFP is subject to all the Terms and Conditions specified in Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers.
- c. Proposers are responsible for all costs related to the preparation and submission of a Proposal.
- d. Proposals become the property of the County and may become part of any subsequent Agreement between the Proposer and the County.
- e. Successful Proposal(s) will be posted online in the DHS Solicitations Archive after an Agreement has been fully executed by the County and the Successful Proposer(s).

4.6 Pennsylvania’s Right-to-Know Law

Proposers should be aware that all documents and materials submitted in response to this RFP may be subject to requests for access to public records made pursuant to Pennsylvania’s Right-To-Know Law (RTKL). Under the RTKL, records in the possession of a public agency like the County are presumed to be public records and the County may have to make documents and materials submitted by the Proposer available to a requestor after an award of an Agreement is made.

If the Proposer includes any information within its Proposal that the Proposer asserts is either a “trade secret” or “confidential proprietary information,” as those terms are defined under the RTKL, the Proposer must include with its Proposal a written statement signed by an authorized representative of the Proposer identifying those portions or parts of its Proposal that the Proposer believes constitute a “trade secret” or “confidential proprietary information” and provide contact information to enable DHS to contact the Proposer in the event that the County receives a Right-To-Know request for the Proposal. The Proposer shall have five (5) business days from date of receipt of any notification from the County to provide a written statement signed by an authorized representative of the Proposer explaining why the Proposal or any portion thereof is exempt from disclosure as a trade secret, confidential proprietary information or other legal reason. The County shall consider this statement in either granting or denying a request for public access to the Proposal or any portion thereof. The County will notify the Proposer of its decision whether to grant or deny the request either in whole or in part.

Section 5: How DHS Will Evaluate Your Proposal

DHS will convene an Evaluation Committee to evaluate Proposals. The Evaluation Committee will assign scores to each Proposal by awarding points based on the evaluation criteria in Section 3: Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria, by using the point scale listed in Section 5.1 b.

5.1 Evaluation of Proposals

The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

- a. DHS will form an Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee, which will be comprised of evaluators with expertise in the subject matter of this RFP, may include community members with lived experience, external subject matter experts, provider representative(s), representative(s) from key partners or funders, and DHS staff.
- b. All Evaluation Committee members will individually review and score each Proposal. Each Evaluation Committee member will award points for each response on a Proposer’s Response Form, utilizing their personal expertise and best judgment of how the Proposal submitted by that Proposer meets the evaluation criteria in Section 3 using the following scale:

0 – Not addressed in Proposal

- 1 – Poor
- 2 – Below expectations
- 3 – Meets expectations
- 4 – Exceeds expectations
- 5 – Outstanding

- c. Each 0-5 score will be multiplied by the appropriate weight for the number of possible points noted after each evaluation criterion in Section 3. For example, for a criterion worth 15 points, the 0-5 score would be multiplied by three. An “Outstanding” response would receive 15 points, while one that “Meets Expectations” would receive nine points.
- d. DHS will tally the average scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the average scores, and arrive at a consensus on which Proposer(s) can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP. The Committee will have discretion to either: (1) recommend to the DHS Director that a reduced number of Proposals be shortlisted for more extensive review through a formal oral presentation to the Committee, interview or a site visit or (2) recommend to the DHS Director that DHS request authorization for the County to enter into an Agreement(s) with the Successful Proposer(s).
- e. As described in d above, DHS, on behalf of the County, shall have the exclusive discretion to shortlist a reduced number of Proposals for more extensive review. In this case, DHS may request that shortlisted Proposers make a formal oral presentation to the Evaluation Committee. Each Committee member will individually score the oral presentation of the shortlisted Proposers using the following criteria and the scale outlined in 5.1b. The maximum score that a shortlisted Proposer’s oral presentation can receive is 15 points:
 - Presentation demonstrates Proposer’s ability to implement the Contract Services effectively (5 points)
 - Proposer’s answers to Evaluation Committee’s questions demonstrate Proposer’s ability to implement the Contract Services (5 points)
 - Proposer’s presentation is thoughtful and well prepared (5 points)
- f. DHS will tally the scores of the members of the Evaluation Committee and report a list of average scores to the entire Committee. The Committee will meet, consider the scores and arrive at a consensus as to which Proposer(s) can best provide the Contract Services in response to the RFP.
- g. The Committee will submit its recommendation for award of an Agreement or Agreements to the DHS Director for approval. The Director will, in turn, submit a request to the County Manager for approval for the County to enter into an Agreement with the Successful Proposer(s).
- h. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer to discuss any areas of the Proposal needing clarification or further explanation.
- i. At any time during the evaluation process, DHS may contact a Proposer’s references.
- j. As part of determining a Proposer’s eligibility to enter a contract with Allegheny County, all Proposers’ financial audits or other documentation will be reviewed by DHS fiscal analysts to ensure a Proposer’s financial stability.

- k. **The County is under no obligation to award or enter into an Agreement with a Proposer as a result of this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals.**
- l. All Proposers will be notified of the County’s final decision of which Proposer(s) will be awarded an Agreement.
- m. Proposers that are not awarded an Agreement but who are interested in receiving feedback regarding their submission may request a phone call at DHSProposals@allegchenycounty.us.

5.2 Other Requirements

For a Proposal to be eligible for evaluation, it must be:

- a. Received by the due date/time.
- b. Properly formatted and include responses to all requested information.
- c. Complete with all required forms and attachments.

Proposals which do not meet the above requirements will be automatically rejected and will not be presented to the Evaluation Committee.

Section 6: Contract Requirements for Successful Proposers

In order to enter into an Agreement with the County, Successful Proposers must comply with all contract requirements listed below and all standard terms and conditions contained in a County contract for provision of services to DHS and its offices. In addition, Successful Proposers must be able to meet the insurance requirements necessary to provide the Contract Services. Additional details about contracting with Allegheny County and the insurance requirements are available in the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#) and the [Insurance Requirements Overview](#) at www.allegchenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations under the “Required documents.”

6.1 Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) Requirements

Allegheny County has MWDBE goals of 13% participation for Minority Business Enterprises and 2% participation for Women Business Enterprises and expects that Successful Proposers will make a “good faith effort” to help the County meet these goals.

- a. All Proposals must include a completed Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form and supporting documents. The Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form should be completed as follows:
 - All Proposers must complete Section 1 – Contact Information and attach their MWDBE Diversity Plan (see Section 4 – Sample Diversity Policy).

- If the Proposer can meet the MWDBE contract goals, the Proposer should complete Section 2 – MWDBE Participation Statement. Proposers also must attach the MWDBE certifications of the firms cited in the Participation Statement.
 - If the Proposer would like to request a waiver from participating in the MWDBE contract goals, the Proposer should complete Section 2 – MWDBE Participation Statement and Section 3 – MWDBE Participation Waiver Request Form.
- b. MWDBE forms and resources can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
- [Allegheny County DHS Combined MWDBE Form](#)
 - MWDBE Resources
 - [MWDBE Contract Specifications Manual](#)
 - [MWDBE Guide for DHS Proposers](#)
- c. For more information about MWDBEs, visit the [Allegheny County Department of Equity and Inclusion website](#).
- d. A listing of certified DBE vendors can be found at <https://paucp.dbesystem.com>.

6.2 Veteran-Owned Small Business (VOSB) Requirement

Allegheny County also has a goal of 5% participation for veteran-owned small businesses (VOSB) in all contracts. The County, therefore, expects that Successful Proposers will make a “good faith effort” to help the County meet this goal.

- a. A veteran-owned small business is defined by the County as a business having 100 or fewer full-time employees and not less than 51% of which is owned by one or more veterans, or in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more veterans, and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more veterans. The VOSB vendor **MUST** provide proof of veteran ownership including percentage and name and address of business.
- For contracts under \$100,000, VOSB vendors are from all bonding requirements.
- b. All Proposals must include either of the following:
- If the Proposer can meet the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement is required. You must also attach a copy of the VOSB vendor(s) DD 214 discharge form(s) cited in the Participation Statement.
 - If the Proposer requests a waiver from participating in the VOSB contract goal, a completed VOSB Participation Statement and VOSB Waiver Request are required.
- c. VOSB forms can be found at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations:
- [VOSB Participation Statement](#)
 - [VOSB Waiver Request](#)
- d. A listing of Small Businesses, Small Diverse Businesses, and Veteran Business Enterprises (SB, SDB, and VBE) can be found at www.dgs.internet.state.pa.us/suppliersearch.

6.3 HIPAA Compliance

DHS is a covered entity under the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Therefore, a Successful Proposer must comply with all HIPAA requirements.

6.4 Cyber Security

- a. Successful Proposers must meet the minimum computer specifications that begin on page 14 of the [DHS Contract Specifications Manual](#), available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations.
- b. All electronic devices must have sufficient security software and settings to minimize the risk of an information breach.
- c. Successful Proposers must also have policies in place to ensure that electronic devices are physically secure when not in use (e.g., locked in a vehicle trunk, password protected).

6.5 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Requirements

By submitting a Proposal, a Proposer agrees to not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, independent contractor, client or any other person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, familial status, age (40 or over), or use of a guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical disability.

6.6 Language Diversity Requirements

Successful Proposer(s) must assure resources are secured and/or made available for participants/consumers/clients with limited English proficiency or other communication barriers. Such actions shall include but not be limited to assessing the need for interpreters, evaluating the need for alternate language materials, identifying internal and external resources to meet identified needs, and accessing services contracted by DHS through their assigned contract monitor(s).